



Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh
Regulating Health +
Social Care Professionals

Guidance on Continuing Professional Development

Social Workers Registration Board

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Introduction

About CORU

CORU is responsible for regulating health and social care professions. It comprises the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and the Registration Boards established under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended).

CORU's role is to protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct, education, training and competence through statutory registration of health and social care professionals.

The designated professions under the Act are clinical biochemists, counsellors, dietitians, dispensing opticians, medical scientists, occupational therapists, optometrists, orthoptists, physical therapists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, radiation therapists, radiographers, social care workers, social workers and speech and language therapists.

The Health and Social Care Professionals Act (2005, as amended)

Section 27 (1) of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act states that *the object of the registration board of a designated profession is to protect the public by fostering high standards of professional competence among registrants of that profession.*

Section 27 (3)(c) states that one of the functions of a registration board is *to give guidance to registrants concerning ethical conduct and give guidance and support to them concerning the practice of the designated profession and continuing professional development.*

About this document

This guidance document outlines information provided by the Health and Social Care Professionals Council on your responsibility to engage in continuing professional development required by the Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- › The Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics
- › Support for Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

1.1 What is Continuing Professional Development?

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the means by which health and social care professionals maintain and improve their knowledge, skills and competence, and develop the professional qualities required throughout their professional life. CPD is an integral component in the continuing provision of safe and effective services for the benefit of service users.

CPD is an ongoing process that occurs when undertaking any activity relevant to the role of the professional that provides new insight and learning by the professional.

1.2 Why engage in Continuing Professional Development?

Active engagement in CPD is vital to ensure that health and social care professionals continue to have the up-to-date knowledge and skills necessary for protection of the public using registrant's services.

CPD has significant professional value; engaging with life-long learning allows you to improve and enhance your practice. You are expected to keep your knowledge, skills and competencies up to date. Through participating in and recording CPD, you are actively ensuring the delivery of safe and effective services for the benefit of your service users.

CPD is an important component of the Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics required by the Social Workers Registration Board, as per the Health and Social Care Professionals Act (2005, as amended).

CPD and the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics

The Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics sets out the standards of conduct, performance and ethics all CORU registered social workers must adhere to throughout the course of their work.

As part of the application to join the Register for Social Workers, you have signed a statutory declaration stating that you have read, understood and agree to abide by the Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

2.1 CPD and the Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics

The Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics requires that you:

- › must ensure that your knowledge, skills and performance are of a high quality, up to date and relevant to your practice.
- › must participate in continuing professional development (CPD) on an ongoing basis.
- › should consider the support and guidance provided by your Registration Board regarding CPD and,
- › should keep a record of the activities you have completed.

As a registrant you must comply with the Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

You must be aware that a breach or breaches of this Code could be held to be professional misconduct or poor professional performance and could result in a disciplinary sanction being imposed.

“Professional misconduct” as defined by the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended) means any act, omission or pattern of conduct of the registrant that is a breach of the code of professional conduct and ethics adopted by the registration board of that profession.¹

“Poor professional performance” as defined by the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended) means any failure² of the registrant to meet the standards of competence that may reasonably be expected of registrants practising that profession.³

1 Section 50 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005.

2 Failure in the context of poor professional performance has been interpreted by the Supreme Court as a serious failure. See *Corbally v Medical Council & Ors.* [2015] IESC 9

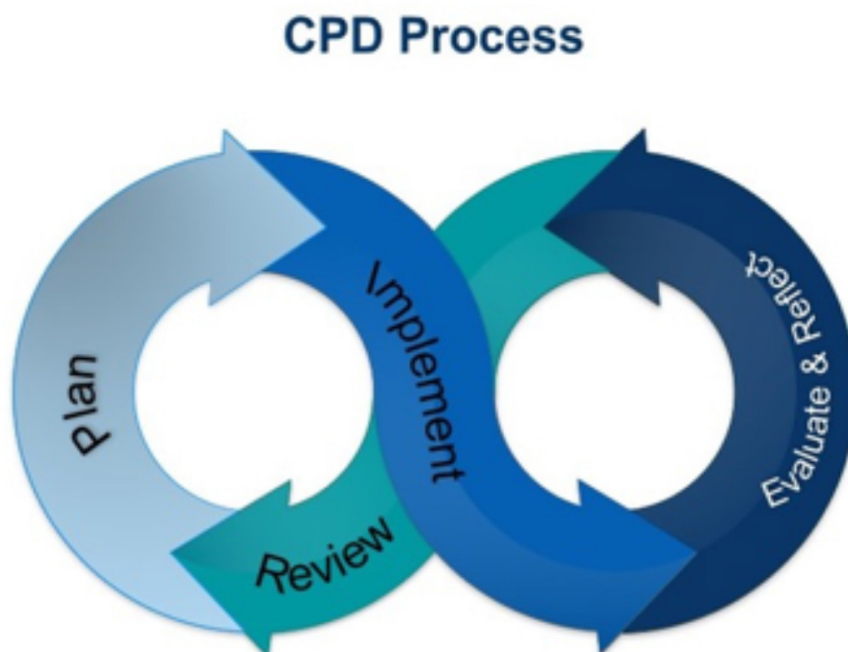
3 Section 50 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005.

Your Continuing Professional Development Process

CPD is an ongoing process and a range of learning activities should be undertaken on a regular basis. It is expected that at minimum you can demonstrate achieving 30 CPD credits in every 12-month period.

It is recommended that you have a process in place to ensure that you engage in a planned way in CPD.

CPD Process⁴



Review

This stage of the CPD process includes a self-directed review of your knowledge, skills, performance and professional qualities in the context of your professional role, being mindful of current and future practice.

Plan

You should identify your priority learning needs, the outcomes you would like to achieve and the learning activities that will help you achieve them.

⁴ Adapted from Kolb's Cycle of Experiential learning

Implement

This is where you take action on your plan and undertake the learning activities you identified.

Evaluate and Reflect

This stage of the CPD process is about evaluating and reflecting on the impact that the learning and its integration into your professional practice has on quality service delivery and service user outcomes.

It is best practice that each stage of the CPD process should be documented to demonstrate how you ensure your knowledge, skills and performance are of a high quality, up to date and relevant to your practice.

For further information on CPD process please see Support for Continuing Professional Development available on CORU website.

Continuing Professional Development Audits

The Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics states that you should:

- › Consider the support and guidance provided by the Social Workers Registration Board regarding CPD and,
- › Keep a record of the activities you have completed.

The Social Workers Registration Board may audit your compliance with this section of the Social Workers Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

If you are called for audit, you will be required to submit the following information:

- › Record of your implementation of learning activities that achieved 30 CPD credits of new or enhanced learning.
- › Record of your evaluation and reflection of the learning achieved.
- › Record of your review of learning needs for the next 12-month period.
- › Record of your planned learning activities for the next 12-month period.

For further information on audits please refer to the CORU website.

Continuing Professional Development

Record Templates

Name:		CORU Registration Number:	
Audit period from:		Audit period to:	

Implement			Evaluate & Reflect	
Date and time spent	Type of Learning Activity	CPD credits	Learning Outcome	Impact on practice
When did you undertake this learning activity?	What was the name of the activity?	Approx. 1 CPD credit for every hour of new or enhanced learning achieved	What have you learnt through completing this activity? How have your skills and knowledge improved or developed?	How have you integrated this learning into your practice? How has this learning made a difference to your capability and performance in your role?

Review	Plan
What do I want or need to learn in the next 12 months?	What learning activities will I do to achieve this in the next 12 months?

